

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 201

May 24, 1995, 6:32 p.m.
Page S-7361 Temp. Record

BUDGET RESOLUTION/Point of Order on Children's Medicaid Benefits

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1996-2002 . . . S. Con. Res. 13. Exon motion to waive the Budget Act for the consideration of the Exon (for Murray) amendment No. 1163.

ACTION: MOTION REJECTED, 45-55

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. Con. Res. 13, the fiscal year 1996 Concurrent Budget Resolution, will reduce projected spending over 7 years to balance the budget by fiscal year (FY) 2002 without increasing taxes. Savings that will accrue from lower debt service payments (an estimated \$170 billion) will be dedicated to a reserve fund, which may be used for tax reductions after enactment of laws to ensure a balanced budget. Highlights include the following: the rate of growth in Medicare will be slowed to 7.1 percent; Medicaid's rate of growth will be slowed to 5 percent and it will be transformed into a block grant program; the Commerce Department and more than 100 other Federal programs, agencies, and commissions will be eliminated; welfare and housing programs will be reformed; agriculture, energy, and transportation subsidies will be cut; foreign aid will be cut; defense spending will be cut and then allowed to increase back to its 1995 level; and Social Security will not be altered.

The Exon (for Murray) amendment would create a majority point of order against considering any bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that would cause children eligible to receive benefits under Medicaid (whether currently or in the future) to lose any of those benefits.

The amendment was offered after all debate time had expired. However, some statements on amendments were added to the record or were made before the amendments were offered and before debate time had expired. Also, by unanimous consent, 1 minute of time was allowed on each amendment for explanatory statements before each vote. Senator Domenici raised a point of order that the amendment violated the Budget Act. Senator Exon then moved to waive the Budget Act for the consideration of the amendment. Generally those favoring the motion to waive favored the amendment; those opposing the motion to waive opposed the amendment.

NOTE: A three-fifths majority (60) vote is required to waive the Budget Act.

Those favoring the motion to waive contended:

(See other side)

YEAS (45)			NAYS (55)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans (1 or 2%)	Democrats (44 or 96%)		Republicans (53 or 98%)	Democrats (2 or 4%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Chafee	Akaka	Inouye	Abraham	Hutchison	Byrd		
	Baucus	Johnston	Ashcroft	Inhofe	Nunn		
	Biden	Kennedy	Bennett	Jeffords			
	Bingaman	Kerrey	Bond	Kassebaum			
	Boxer	Kerry	Brown	Kempthorne			
	Bradley	Kohl	Burns	Kyl			
	Breaux	Lautenberg	Campbell	Lott			
	Bryan	Leahy	Coats	Lugar			
	Bumpers	Levin	Cochran	Mack			
	Conrad	Lieberman	Cohen	McCain			
	Daschle	Mikulski	Coverdell	McConnell			
	Dodd	Moseley-Braun	Craig	Murkowski			
	Dorgan	Moynihan	D'Amato	Nickles			
	Exon	Murray	DeWine	Packwood			
	Feingold	Pell	Dole	Pressler			
	Feinstein	Pryor	Domenici	Roth			
	Ford	Reid	Faircloth	Santorum			
	Glenn	Robb	Frist	Shelby			
	Graham	Rockefeller	Gorton	Simpson			
	Harkin	Sarbanes	Gramm	Smith			
	Heflin	Simon	Grams	Snowe			
	Hollings	Wellstone	Grassley	Specter			
			Gregg	Stevens			
			Hatch	Thomas			
			Hatfield	Thompson			
			Helms	Thurmond			
				Warner			

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

The Murray amendment is a "think twice" amendment. If the Senate is considering legislation that will have an adverse effect on children who receive Medicaid, it should be possible to make the Senate vote specifically on that issue. Medicaid is the only source of medical care for over 36 million Americans, almost half of whom are children. These people are poor--they cannot afford to pay for their own medical care. Often, the problem is that they have been bankrupted by catastrophic illnesses. The mantra that our colleagues have been chanting is "cut, cut, cut"--the Murray amendment is an attempt to break through that chant so that Senators can see the consequences of their cuts. We do not want to support reforms that make it impossible for poor Americans to care for their children who are dying of cancer, and neither do our colleagues. Unfortunately, when we offered this amendment in the Budget Committee, we were immediately subjected to a barrage of partisan rhetoric. We hope that the amendment fairs better on the Senate floor.

Those opposing the motion to waive contended:

We do not measure compassion by how many people we have enrolled in public assistance programs, nor do we measure the success of welfare programs by the generosity of the benefits provided. Further, we do not think it is compassionate to all Americans, including welfare recipients, to bankrupt America by paying for a welfare system that is growing at an unsustainable rate. Senators may say they do not know how to end dependency, but social scientists, in every study since the SIME/DIME study, have found that the way to create dependency, illegitimacy, and numerous related social pathologies is to increase benefits. Senators may say that we need to continue to provide the benefits that are driving up Medicaid costs, but they are then ignoring that doing so is more than our country can afford. Adding a new condition on reforming Medicaid, that is clearly intended to stand as an impediment to reform efforts, is not a constructive proposal. Accordingly, we urge the rejection of the motion to waive.